

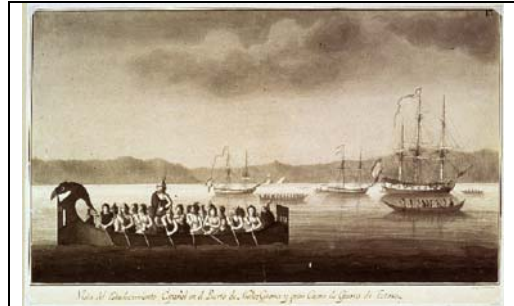


FACT SHEET

Fort Núñez Gaona – Diah Veterans Park **Historic Site Marks first European Settlement in Washington State**

Makah Nation at Neah Bay location of early Spanish fort

On the shores of what is now called Neah Bay the Spanish constructed the first European settlement in the Continental United States West of the Rockies and North of San Francisco. This historic settlement was called Fort Núñez Gaona. Alferez Manuel Quimper landed in his sloop, the *Princesa Real*, near this site on July 24, 1790. He named the bay, Bahía de Núñez Gaona after Admiral Manuel Núñez Gaona, a high ranking naval official. Quimper took formal possession of Núñez Gaona Bay, already inhabited by the Makah people, in the name of Spanish King Carlos IV of Castile and Leon on August 1, 1790.



Frigate Princesa off Fort Núñez Gaona



Chief Tetaku

Although Núñez Gaona bay was not well suited for mooring large ships, it offered Spain a ready base for protecting Spain's political, commercial, and scientific interests in this region. This bay played a significant role in international history and intrigue during this period of the 18th century, as other European powers challenged Spain's claim to the Pacific Northwest in an attempt to expand their own naval and commercial influence here and vie for dominance.

First Settlement Established

On May, 29, 1792, Lt. Sálvador Fidalgo, following the orders of Count Revillagigedo, the Viceroy of New Spain, guided the Spanish frigate *Princesa* to this shore and officially established the Spanish settlement Fort Núñez Gaona.



Fort Núñez Gaona under construction.

Aboard were Spanish, Mexican, and Peruvian born settlers, led by Spaniard Commander Salvador Fidalgo, First Pilot Antonio Serantes, Second Pilot Hipolito Tono, Chaplin Jose Alejandro Lopez de Nava, Surgeon Juan de Dios Morelos, seventy seaman, and thirteen soldiers. The colonists cleared the land along the stream behind where this monument now stands and constructed their settlement across the stream from the Makah villages. On June 6, 1792 the Spanish schooners *Sutil* and *Mexicana*, under the command of captains Dionisio Alcala Galiano and Cayetano Valdez, were welcomed by Chief Tetako, considered the most important native leader in this region. The chief was invited on board one of the Spanish ships and sailed across the straight of Juan de Fuca with the Spanish serving as the ambassador for his native people.

Fort Núñez Gaona – Diah Veterans Park

The drawings of the fort, bay, crew and Chief Tetako were works done by artist Jose Cardero, a crew member of the schooner Sutil.

The settlement of Fort Núñez Gaona consisted of an infirmary, storehouses, dwellings, place of worship, bakery, and a battery for mounting canons. There were also corrals for pigs, sheep, cows, and goats. For sustenance, the men planted vegetables, grains, and fruits. From this settlement the Spanish conducted the first international trading with the native people of Washington, completed scientific studies of local flora and fauna, recorded and preserved the language, songs, religion and, customs of the Native people, and mapped and named key geographical points .

Spaniards Left Legacy

Even as the settlers underwent these important activities, they also brought their own culture. Steel implements, ceramics, and other technology were introduced as well as agricultural plants and livestock that are now the foundation of Washington's economy. The fort was occupied until September 29th 1792, when Fildalgo received orders to abandon the bay and move to Nootka, a more developed port facility on Vancouver Island. Spain officially relinquished its claim to this region in 1819 under the Adams Onis Treaty.

Spain sent some of its best scientists and mariners to investigate, map, and explore the Pacific Northwest from 1774 to 1795. The most noted were; Juan Pérez, Esteban José Martínez, Bruno de Hezeta, Juan Francisco Bodega y Quadra, Antonio Mourelle, Ignacio Arteaga, Gonzalo López de Haro, Francisco Eliza, Manuel Quimper, Alejandro Malispina, Dionisio Alcala Galiano, Cayetano Valdez, José Camacho, Juan Matrinez Zayas, Tomas de Suria, José Bustamante, Mariano Mozino, Jacinto Caamaño, Felipe Bauza, José Cardero, and Ramón Saavedra. These intrepid explorers and scientists left an enduring historical scientific and commercial legacy in Washington state.

About the Monument

This monument should serve to recognize a shared past and honor the accomplishments of two important nations, one native and one foreign, whose path of destiny intersected on this site resulting in the birth of a new and indelible chapter in the history of this region. On this site a monument recognizing the approximately 300 brave veterans from Neah Bay who honorably served in the United State military will take its rightful place.



The structure is a collaboration of the Spanish government, Vice Consul Luis Fernando Esteban, the Makah Tribal Council, the Office of Lt. Governor Brad Owen, Neah Bay area veterans and members of the local community. When completed, it will consist of six large cedar columns and resemble a traditional Makah longhouse. It will bear the flags of the United States, Spain, the Makah Nation, the Nuu-chah-nulth, the state of Washington and each branch of the United States military. A granite wall will display the names of the veterans. A stake fence to the west is similar to the style used in the original Fort Núñez Gaona. It is scheduled for formal dedication in August, 2007.

For more information about the project, please contact Antonio Sanchez Ph.D., director of economic development and international relations in the Office of Lieutenant Governor at (360) 786-7786.